

MONROE COUNTY NEWS RELEASE

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Sunday Evening Update on Ice Storm Response

Safety Tips for Families Returning Home Once Power Is Restored, RG&E Making Continued Progress, State of Emergency Will Remain In Effect At Least Until Tomorrow Morning, Red Cross Shelter In Hilton Is Closed.

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle announced that RG&E continued to make progress in restoring power and that 131, 000 households have been brought back online, but 80,000 are still without power. Therefore, the State of Emergency will remain in effect at least until tomorrow morning to continue to accommodate crews working to restore power. The County Executive and County Health Director Dr. Andrew Doniger also provided a series of safety tips for families returning home once their power has been restored.

In addition, the American Red Cross has closed its shelter in Hilton at the West Avenue School at 225 West Ave.

“Power is being restored to more and more homes. However, we continue to be concerned for those without power and therefore the State of Emergency will remain in effect at least until tomorrow morning,” said Doyle.

People returning to their homes after power has been restored should be mindful of the following safety tips:

- Food in the refrigerator is good for only six to eight hours after the loss of power. Residents should dispose of food that has been left in a powerless refrigerator for longer than that period. Food in the freezer is typically safe for 24-48 hours after the loss of power.
- Do not take lanterns, lighters or other flames into your home until you have determined that it is free of leaking gas that could become ignited.
- Check thoroughly for gas leaks – If you smell gas take the following steps: (1) Leave immediately. (2) Call 911 from another location.
- If any of your appliances are wet: (1) Turn off the main power switch for the house. (2) Unplug the wet appliances. (3) Dry them out. (4) Reconnect the dry appliances. (5) Turn on the main power switch. ***Don't do any of this while standing in water.***
- Once settled, call relatives and inform them that you are safe.
- Be aware of weakened trees and power lines when working outside your home.

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Additionally, residents without power continue to be urged to use alternative heating sources only in well-ventilated areas. Also, due to the time change related to Daylight Savings Time, people should check the batteries in their smoke detectors and their battery-powered carbon monoxide detectors.

Doyle also provided tips on how residents can protect themselves from price gouging by irresponsible contractors. Doyle outlined the following steps:

- Check The Firm's Reputation: Information is available through the Better Business Bureau at 1-800-828-5000 or online at www.upstateny.bbb.org.
- Ask the Contractor for Proof of Insurance: If the contractor is not insured, you may be liable for accidents on your property.
- Ask for References, a Written Estimate and a Signed Contract
- Don't Sign Completion Papers or Make a Final Payment Until Work is Completed.

While no incidents of gouging have been reported so far, Doyle urged residents encountering such behavior to contact the State Attorney General's Office at 1-800-771-7755.

City officials have also announced that no bulk refuse collection will take place until April 12. Regular refuse and recycling collection will continue as scheduled. City residents can store debris and branches by the curb.

Monroe County Previously Announced:

The County Executive is also exploring avenues for people and businesses to obtain low interest loans to help cover cleanup and damage recovery costs. Details on these efforts will be announced in the future.

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